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AN

ESSAY

ON

FRIENDSHIP,

A

POEM.

Amicitia plurimas res continet; quoquo te verteris preſto eſt; nullo loco excluditur; nunquam intempeſtiva nunquam moleſta eſt.

— — — — —Virtutum enim Amicitia adjutrix a natura data eſt, non Vitiorum Comes.

CICERO de Amicitia.

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POEM

ON

FRIENDSHIP.

IN AN

ESSAY.

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Introduction and Invocation — — —

AN

ESSAY on FRIENDSHIP,

IN AN

EPISTLE to *PALEMON.*

DEIGN, worthy Friend, the moral Page to view,
The grateful Lines I conſecrate to you;
Shall Friendſhip be my firſt *profeſs'd* Eſſay,
And ſhall not *Friendſhip* patronize the Lay?
The Thought were Treaſon to the ſacred Claim,
Forbid it all that's dear to Friendſhip's Name.

Come, heav'nly Muſe, (if heav'nly Pow'rs ordain,
When Mortals would attempt a ſacred Strain,
Such Aid divine) inſpire me with the Theme,
Which late poſſeſs'd me in a pleaſing Dream:
It was a Dream—not ſuch as waits the Night,
When lawleſs Fancy, in her airy Flight,

Thro' trackleſs Regions of Chimæras ſpeeds,
Now ſports with Fairies on the flow'ry Meads;
Now flies by Magic o'er inchanted Grounds;
Now joins with Witches in their mazy Rounds.
Nor ſuch as waits the melancholy Bed,
Where Fancy's Fears, of Superſtition bred,
Now meets the Giant ſtriding from his Cell;
Now in the Church-Yard hears the doleful Knell;
Or, from ſome new-made Grave, ſees Spectres riſe,
Of hideous Features, and tremendous Size.
No, '*twas a Dream*—when Fancy, *juſter* far,
Cloſe eying Reaſon as her Polar Star,
In youthful Prime, her new-fledg'd Pinions try'd,
Adventrous launch'd me on her airy Tide,
And quick convey'd me to a Place unknown,
Where livelieſt Scenes of rural Grandeur ſhone.

Hail, ſweet Retreat! where all the Pow'rs of Art,
To Nature's various Scenes, new Charms impart:
I now beneath the Sylvan Umbrage ſtray,
Where devious Paths in wild Mæanders play;
Where Jaſmine Bow'rs, and flow'ry Shrubs adorn,
And richeſt Odours ſcent the dewy Morn;

Where

Where tuneful Birds in ſweeteſt Raptures ſing,
And Fragrance ſports on Zephyr's downy Wing;
Where Temples, Arbors, Grots, and Caves unite,
With breathing Statues to inſpire Delight;
Whilſt thro' the Shade of many an ample Grove,
And o'er green Banks, and flow'ry Lawns I rove.

From Scenes ſo lively tow'rds a Dale I drew,
A Sylvan Dale, where Thorns and Willows grew;
Where antient Trees, with wide-ſpread Arms, diſplay'd
Romantic Grandeur o'er the glimm'ring Glade:
Rocks, Cliffs, and moſſy Banks around were ſeen,
And ev'ry Thicket wore a ſable Green.
Purling o'er pebbly Track, here from below,
The pendent Cliff, ſoft murm'ring Waters flow
With gentle Sweep. And from yon Mountain's Side,
Down a ſmooth Rock, at firſt the Waters glide;
But ſoon more ſteep, in cryſtal Sheets, they fall
From Rock to Rock, and foaming rapid roll;
Till ſtealing thro' the Dale, where Windings play,
Their ſoothing Murmurs gently die away.

But now my Courſe, aſcending I begun,
Whilſt on the Mountain's Side th' enliv'ning Sun,

'Twixt the tall Trees' wide-waving Leaves diſplay'd
A bland Variety of Light and Shade,
A checker'd Green, untill, with gay Surprize,
The ambient Proſpects ſtruck my wand'ring Eyes.

Here green Corn Fields to the ſoft Breezes wave,
There in broad Ponds the luſty Oxen lave;
On yonder Moor the Beaſts of Burden rove,
And Heifers ſeek the Influence of the Grove;
Spread o'er thoſe Hills, with Flocks the Shepherds ſtray,
And by their Dams the ſportive Lambkins play;
Lo! there a River ſkirts the Woodland Side,
And yonder Sloops its cryſtal Stream divide.

From the Parterre what Charms ſalute mine Eyes!
There Nature wantons in her various Dyes;
There Nature paints with Colours all her own,
Nor will admit a Rival near her Throne;
The Lily, Hyacinth, Narciſſus, Roſe,
And each Variety the Floriſt blows,
There, " with *confeſt* Magnificence, deride
" Our mean Attire, and Impotence of Pride."

See, by Pomona's Care! yon Trees put on
Their blooming Robes, and whiten in the Sun:
Thick as the pearly Dew the Bloſſoms lie,
And promiſe Plenty to th' admiring Eye:
May ev'ry Flowret into Fruitage riſe,
And laughing Autumn reap his golden Prize.

From theſe gay Scenes retir'd, my Fancy roves
Upon the Mount, beneath the higheſt Groves;
A dread Magnificence ſalutes mine Eyes,
The tow'ring Oaks ſeem waving in the Skies;
The tow'ring Oaks, whoſe ample Leaf-ſpread Dome,
Betwixt their Pillars ſheds an awful Gloom.

As when in Ruins laid, by Time o'er-borne,
A Gothic Temple in a Wood forlorn,
The maſſy Columns ſhaded by the Trees,
The muſing Mind with awful Wonder ſeize.

Inſtant I parted from the ſhady Scene,
Into an Area of incloſed Green,
Round which the Wood protected from a Storm,
An ample Edifice, of circling Form;

On central Eminence it ſtood diſplay'd,
A Terrace-Walk ſurrounding I ſurvey'd;
A lofty Porch, on Doric Pillars plac'd,
A Flight of Steps and folding Portals grac'd;
A curious Pediment Attention drew,
On which theſe Characters appear'd to View,
The FANE OF VIRTUES—ſtruck with what I read,
A quick Emotion thro' my Boſom ſpread;
The yielding Portals to my Touch gave Way,
And I enjoy'd the Temple's full Diſplay.

Twice twenty Pillars, in the Doric Taſte,
With true Magnificence the Temple grac'd;
Twice twenty Windows copious Light ſupplied,
Whoſe finiſh'd Frames with the wrought Columns vied;
With curious Art the Dome was ſtucco'd o'er,
From many a Quarry ſhone the checquer'd Floor
In rich Moſaic.

But what Objects theſe,
Whoſe juſt Proportions my Attention ſeize,
Around the ſpacious Wall ſeems nich'd and lin'd,
With ſtriking Effigies of human Kind?
On nearer View I find each Virtue's Name,
And ev'ry Figure nigh, mark'd out by Fame,

As

As an Example: Faithful here the Stone,
Laconic tells how ev'ry Worthy ſhone.
No Gods, nor Goddeſſes, of wond'rous Tale,
No boaſted Hieroglyphics here prevail;
But Facts, plain Facts, upon the ſimpleſt Plan,
Preach home each Leſſon to the Heart of Man;
With virtuous Glow I feel my Boſom fir'd,
O loſt to Virtue, if not here inſpir'd!

" *Great* ANTONINUS, * whoſe inſtructive Page
" And Reign did Honour to the Roman Age;
" As good as great his Royal Life was found,
" A bright Example to the Nations round."

Hail, Monarch and Philoſopher! thy Name
Shall *deathleſs* brighten on the Rolls of Fame.

" *Illuſtrious* SCIPIO, † when the Roman Bands
" He led victorious thro' Iberian Lands,
" A princely Maid his Heart with Love inſpir'd,
" Her matchleſs Charms his Soul with Raptures fir'd;
" But when he heard the ſuppliant Captive prove
" Her Name, her Country, and her plighted Love,

* The *Roman* Emperor *Marcus Antoninus*. Vide *General Univerſal Hiſtory*, Vol. XIV. p. 206.
† The Elder *Scipio Africanus*. Vide *Livy*'s *Roman Hiſtory*, Lib. xxiv. Cap. L.

" Tho' youthful Blood within his Veſſels roll'd,
" And well he knew no Pow'r on Earth controul'd,
" He urg'd no more:—The Hero ſtood confeſt,
" And thus her Lover and her Friends addreſt:
" Take undefil'd the beauteous Virgin home,
" I aſk no Ranſom but your Hearts for Rome."

" The *Brave* LEONIDAS, ‡ when Perſian Pride,
" And Myriad-Hoſts his native Greece defy'd,
" With dauntleſs Arm receiv'd th' unequal Foe,
" And ſlaughter'd Thouſands in the dreadful Blow;
" And ſince the Delphian Oracle decreed
" The Foe ſhould vanquiſh, or a Monarch bleed,
" With Patriot-Glory fir'd he choſe a Few,
" Who greatly dar'd to bid the World adieu;
" With theſe he all the Hoſts of Perſia brav'd,
" And by a *glorious* Fall his Country ſav'd."

Here all ye Chiefs immortal Honours bring,
And hail the *Patriot* in the Warlike-King.

" The *Wiſe* CONFUCIUS, § tho' an early Sage,
" Was the Reformer of a barb'rous Age;

" The

‡ The famous King of *Sparta*, ſo diſtinguiſhed by the memorable Action of *Thermopylæ*. Vide *General Univerſal Hiſtory*, Vol. VI. p. 435, *&c.*

§ *Confucius*, the great *Chineſe* Philoſopher, born 550 Years before *Chriſt*. Vide *Gen. Biograph. Dict.*

" The Taſk was daring, yet alone he roſe,
" The Reign of Vice and Error to oppoſe;
" By Dint of moral Truths he urg'd his Way,
" Till Midnight Darkneſs own'd the Dawn of Day;
" The Reformation by his Means was great,
" And yet he ſigh'd becauſe 'twas not compleat;
" He made his Life ('twas *all* a Mortal cou'd)
" One great Attempt to do his Country Good."

" The *Syracuſian* FRIENDS ‖, whoſe Mem'ry Fame
" Has grac'd with Glory, and a deathleſs Name:
" When One impriſon'd under fatal Doom,
" Diſclos'd a Wiſh to fix Affairs at home,
" The Other heard, and mourn'd his piteous Caſe,
" And ſtrait became a Surety in his Place;
" And when the pledged Friend was to have dy'd,
" The virtuous Convict *haſten'd* to his Side.
" To ſee ſuch Friends a ſavage World was charm'd,
" And a fierce Tyrant of his Wrath diſarm'd;

‖ Damon & Pythias, Pythagoricæ prudentiæ ſacris initiati, tam fidelem inter ſe amicitiam junxerant, ut eum alterum ex his Dionyſius Syracuſanus interficere vellet, atque is tempus ab eo, quo prius quam periret, domum profectus res ſuas ordinaret, impetraviſſet: Alter vadem ſe pro reditu ejus tyranno dare non dubitavit. Solutus erat periculo mortis qui modo cervices gladio ſubjectas habuerat, eidem caput ſuum ſubjecerat, cui ſecure vivere licebat. Igitur omnes, & imprimis Dionyſius novæ atque ancipitis rei exitum ſpeculabantur. Appropinquante deinde definita die, nec illo redeunte; unuſquiſque ſtultitiæ tam temerarium ſponſorem damnabat: At is nihil ſe de amici conſtantia metuere prædicabat. Eodem autem momento, & hora à Dionyſio conſtituta, qui eam acceperat, ſupervenit: Admiratus amborum animum tyrannus, ſupplicium fidei remiſit; inſuperque eos rogavit ut ſe in ſocietatem amicitiæ, tertium ſodalitii gradum intima culturum benevolentia reciperent. *Memorab. Valer. Max.* Lib. iv. Cap. VII.

" By Virtue overcome he ſet both free,
" And begg'd their Friendſhip might conſiſt of three."

And can ſuch Friendſhip 'mongſt Mankind prevail?
Hail, matchleſs Friends! exalted Friendſhip, hail!
Alas, my Muſe! how little knew my Heart
The noble Ardor Friendſhip cou'd impart:
O! that ſome heav'nly Pow'r wou'd *now* inſpire
My Soul with Friendſhip's more *exalted* Fire;
Correct my Ign'rance in her ſacred Ties,
And grant me to partake her higheſt Joys.

With ſuch Reflexions on the moral Scene,
I now deſcended to th' adjacent Green;
And whilſt my Mind revolv'd the Thoughts impreſs'd,
The ſocial Pray'r ſtill glowing in my Breaſt,
A deep and ſudden Gloom beſet me round,
And, ſore amaz'd, the ſolar Orb I found
As in Eclipſe: I paus'd in ſerious Mood,
When, ſtarting from the Sky, a bluſhing Cloud,
Aſſuming Radiance, and illuming wide,
Of vaſt Dimenſions on the airy Tide,
Came floating o'er the Temple. Here the Blaze
Self-balanc'd hung, and beaming glorious Rays,

Of

Of Azure, Green, and Gold, of brighteſt Hue,
Like parting Curtains, ſwiftly open flew:
And now ineffable ſtood forth diſplay'd,
In all the Pomp of heav'nly Robes array'd,
A Pow'r divine. Seiz'd with the View, I ſtood
In grand Surprize: Pale Fear drove back my Blood,
Untill Reflexion paus'd. At length Diſmay
To the bland Influence of the Scene gave Way;
And I, embolden'd, ventur'd to explore
The glorious Form the heav'nly Stranger wore.

A flowing Mantle, glowing with the Dyes
That gild the riſing Morn, regal'd mine Eyes;
Around his Waiſt a pure æthereal Zone,
With all the Beauties of the Rainbow ſhone;
His chearful Eyes Benevolence expreſt,
His Brow a ſweet Tranquillity confeſt;
Upon his Cheeks were bluſhing Roſes ſeen,
And all the Graces ſmiling in his Mien;
A golden Coronet, adorn'd around,
And tipt with glitt'ring Stars, his Temples bound;
An Olive in his Hand; upon his Breaſt,
Emboſs'd in Gold, were curiouſly expreſt

United Hearts. Perceiving, I ſurvey'd
The *Genius* FRIENDSHIP—ſtrait I Homage paid,
And quick on flutt'ring Hope my Soul was hung;
And O my Thoughts! when, with an Angel's Tongue,
He thus began:—" Aſtoniſh'd Youth ariſe,
" Nor let my Preſence ſtun thee with Surprize;
" I come a friendly Pow'r, tell me thy Care,
" And full diſcloſe the Purport of thy Pray'r."

Thus chear'd, I roſe, and fill'd with rev'rend Awe,
The Tendence of his Words methought I ſaw,
And humbly made Reply. O Pow'r divine!
In whom all ſocial Attributes combine,
Since heav'nly born, no Wonder that thou know'ſt
The glorious Paſſion which my Soul would boaſt;
Guide then the Purpoſe of untaught Deſire,
With ſocial Sentiments my Heart inſpire;
Vouchſafe to teach me what I ought to know,
And with *thine* Influence let my Boſom glow.

I ſaid, and ſtrait the Pow'r whom I addreſs'd
Gave Anſwer mild—" I favour thy Requeſt;
" No trivial one to thee, the Profit thine,
" If thou attentive learn'ſt the Art divine;

The

The *Art* to mend the Morals, ſoften Pride,
To heighten Joys, and ev'ry Grief divide.

But mark me well whilſt I each Point explain,
Leſt thou hereafter ſhou'dſt implore in vain.
Shall heav'nly Pow'rs attending the Moſt High,
Quit their bleſt Regions in the vaulted Sky,
As kind Ambaſſadors to let Man know
The Way to Happineſs whilſt here below;
And Man perverſely quit that better Way,
And into Paths of devious Folly ſtray;
Shall he throw back their Precepts with Diſdain,
And ſtill preſume, when wretched, to complain?

Since mere Benevolence is due to all,
A mere Benevolence thou canſt not call
True Friendſhip. No, 'tis ſomething far above,
'Tis an Exchange, 'twixt ſocial Minds of Love,
Moſt ardent and refin'd: A glorious Strife,
Of gen'rous Acts throughout the Scene of Life:
A ſacred Bond, whence virtuous Minds enjoy
Sublimeſt Pleaſures with the leaſt Alloy.

True Friendſhip grows not with the *Luſt* of Gain,
Nor will ſhe ſort with Pleaſures *ſenſual* Train;
A *conſcious* Indigence can never prove
The vig'rous Source of ſuch exalted Love;
Nor can *like Manners* raiſe the gen'rous Fire
In vicious Minds; for Vice can ne'er inſpire
The ſacred Flame: The Slave of Vice, forlorn,
E'en on a Brother looks with ſecret Scorn.
Hail, VIRTUE, then! 'tis thy intrinſic Worth
That can alone give genuine Friendſhip Birth:
Yet Pleaſure, Profit, and Convenience join
To aid its Growth, and make it brighter ſhine.

Thy Wiſh, a FRIEND—thy Wiſh is nobly aim'd;
Yet e'er the golden Prize be juſtly claim'd,
Some Merit is requir'd—ſearch, ſearch thy Heart,
And try to find out ev'ry faulty Part:
Juſt to thyſelf, no fav'rite Folly ſpare,
Be ev'ry Foible, ev'ry Vice, laid bare;
Each rougher Paſſion to the Bridle bend,
Each proud, vain Notion check: Mean while attend
To ev'ry Embryo-Virtue: Be it thine
To cheriſh thoſe Emotions which refine

The human Heart. View in each friendly Pair
The high Endearments which they mutual ſhare;
The Charms of Sympathy, the tearful Joy,
The gen'rous Purpoſe, and the kind Employ:
But drop not here, to ſolid Virtues riſe,
Be courteous, temp'rate, gen'rous, juſt, and wiſe:
Behold a double Prize I ſet in View!
The Plan for Friendſhip is for Virtue too.

A *Drunkard*'s Friendſhip never dare to try,
The next Debauch he'll break the ſacred Tie;
Or ſhou'd he not, who'd have his Secrets hung
On the vague Conduct of a Drunkard's Tongue?

From *Av'rice* fly, whatever ſhe pretend;
Was ever Av'rice known to make a Friend?
Where Gold and Pleaſure mean the ſelf-ſame Thing,
What Charms, alas! can honeſt Friendſhip bring?

Shun *Pride*, for proud Men let their Foibles paſs,
And view their Virtues thro' a flatt'ring Glaſs:
Or wouldſt thou try—thy Duty bids the Bold
To thy proud Friend his *darling Self* unfold;

Unmaſk his haughty Soul, and ſhew where vain
Self-Love, Self-Ignorance, triumphant reign.
Will he behold thee, and unmov'd ſtand by,
Or view thine Office with a friendly Eye?

More than a glaring Vice *ſmooth Flatt'ry* ſhun,
How many Conqueſts has the Siren won!
And woud'ſt thou, *urg'd* by Principle of Pride,
By this falſe Touchſtone have thy Virtue try'd?
Fly, *fly* the Man, tho' he'd an Angel's Tongue,
If on his Lips eternal Praiſes hung.

If doubtful in this Point—delib'rate ſee,
If Words and Actions in the Man agree:
Is he by juſt and virtuous Men belov'd?
Has he in Friendſhip ever been approv'd?
Does virtuous Fame his Conſtancy confeſs?
Has he reliev'd a Friend in deep Diſtreſs?
On ſuch a one with Confidence depend,
For ſuch a one, who wou'd not *make* a Friend?

Fly *Envy* too; for who, with her, can know
The noble Pleaſures which from Friendſhip flow?

None

None—for the Fiend's a *genuine* Brat of Hell,
And dwells with Slander in her ſnaky Cell.

The *Faithleſs* and *Ungrateful* will revolt;
The *ſelf-ſufficient* Coxcomb own no Fault:
With *chol'ric* Minds in Peace thou canſt not live,
And the *Revengeful* ſeldom will forgive:
The *Coward-Friend* thy Friendſhip will diſgrace;
Ambition's Slave will ſell thee for a Place:
With *fickle* Minds who can ſure Friendſhip know?
And who on *Driv'lers* wou'd their Time beſtow?
The ſhallow Mind with no one Talent fraught,
Save Flow of Words with Impotence of Thought;

Theſe in Extream whenever thou ſhalt find,
Reject them one and all with ſteady Mind;
But if in *ſlight* Degree, thy Thoughts ſuſpend,
For many Virtues ſtill may make a Friend:
At leaſt learn this, it is not thine to know,
A Friendſhip in Perfection here below;
For ſome Alloy thy ev'ry Bliſs attends,
" And ſome Forgiveneſs needs the beſt of Friends." *

The Taſk is irkſome in the ſocial Tie,
To ſhake off thoſe with whom our Secrets lie;

* *Young's Night-Thoughts.*

Be then thy Judgment with Succeſs diſplay'd,
And well conſider e'er thy Choice is made;
Let Senſe, mild Temper, and a courteous Mien,
With moral Virtues, in his Life be ſeen
Theſe Points approv'd, attentive mark his Age,
His Taſte, and Manners; beſt thou wilt engage,
If, as when Concords wake the tuneful Lyre,
Theſe ſhall thy Soul with Harmony inſpire.

Seek but *few* Friends, 'twere Weakneſs to pretend
The Heart divided can in Love tranſcend;
As well might Thames himſelf to Parts divide,
And each ſmall Riv'let boaſt his mighty Tide.
Nor wiſh for Friends too high above thee plac'd,
For Friends poſſeſs, with equal Stations grac'd,
Compleater Bliſs: Their Joys ſerenely glide,
And all their Pleaſures they with Eaſe divide.
Much leſs ſhou'd Friendſhip ſtoop to be the Slave
Of titled Wealth: The truly Great and Brave
Such Terms deſpiſe; yet will they never ſcorn
A Man becauſe he's poor, or humbly born;
Boaſts not a Cottager a Soul that ſprings
From the ſame Fountain with the Breath of Kings?

When

When found the Man who merits Friendſhip's Name,
Whoſe Manners mild invite the ſocial Flame,
Dare not to ſeek or gain the noble Prize
By flatt'ring Language or deceitful Guiſe:
No, let thy Boſom candidly declare
The wiſhful Ardor which is kindled there.
If in his Life ſome virtuous Joys are found,
Watch ſome fit Time to make thoſe Joys abound:
If deep Concerns his Wiſhes ſhou'd confeſs,
Fly to his Aid, and make his Wiſhes leſs;
If he be preſent, modeſtly commend;
If he be abſent, warmly then befriend
His honeſt Fame, and bold rebuke the Tongue
That, fraught with Slander, wou'd his Virtues wrong.
In fine, wou'dſt thou ſucceſsfully inſpire,
From nobleſt Sentiments, the ſocial Fire,
Let him in thee diſcern a gen'rous Mind,
Whoſe Views in all Things are the moſt refin'd;
Whoſe Views in Friendſhip this great Truth approve,
" Love, and Love *only*, is the Loan of Love." †

Then ſcorn by Means of Gifts to purchaſe Friends,
Scorn to be gain'd by mean or ſelfiſh Ends;

† *Young's Night-Thoughts.*

Ignoble both—*ignoble* is the Man,
Who builds his Friendſhip upon ſuch a Plan.

As Friendſhip's Bane the Arts of Flatt'ry ſcorn,
Let truthful Energy thy Words adorn;
Let thy Engagements ever be ſincere,
And thy Regard in Conſtancy appear:
Yea, ſhou'd e'er Wealth preſent a golden Bar,
Shou'd Pow'r invite thee to his giddy Car,
Shou'd Honour court thee with applauding Train,
Or Beauty wooe thee with her ſilken Chain,
And ſhou'd their Charms ſo far Aſcendence gain,
That former Friends thou view'ſt with proud Diſdain;
Or ſhou'd thy Boſom-Friend be plung'd in Woe,
And thy hard Heart refuſe his Caſe to know,
Thou art a *Wretch*, eternal thy Diſgrace,
And ſhalt be mark'd amongſt the baſeſt *baſe*.

What'er thou know'ſt, or prudently conceal,
Or with an eaſy Freedom quick reveal;
A third Friend's Secrets truſted to thy Care,
Thou ſhalt not to a *Second* e'en declare.
Yet let thy Friend an open Conduct view,
For know, large Confidence is Friendſhip's Due;

A ſlight Indiff'rence hurts the ſacred Tie,
" Reſerve will wound it, and Diſtruſt deſtroy:" *
Yea, ſhou'd a Wav'ring in thy Friend appear,
Avoid Diſtruſt, nor even ſeem to fear;
Speak boldly thus, "I with my Friend believe
"My All is ſafe; how can a Friend deceive?"
And if the Tie of Friendſhip yet can bind,
Thy Confidence ſhall fix his wav'ring Mind.

If in thy Friend Infirmities there be,
Or ſome ſlight Foibles, (who from Foibles free?)
Do thou indulgent with his Foibles bear,
Nor let Infirmities abroad appear;
'Twere baſe indeed, ſhou'd Friendſhip not conceal
What to the World 'twere cruel to reveal.

In ſlighter Faults, or Foibles glaring grown,
Be ſtill thy Friendſhip in thy Conduct ſhewn.
Ne'er give thy Tongue eternally to chide,
Nor paſs one Cenſure with a ſcornful Pride;
When juſt the Cauſe, let ſoft'ning Friendſhip try
Each kind Correction fitly to apply;
For thou ſhalt find it aſks a nice Addreſs
To chide or blame in Friendſhip with Succeſs;

* *Young's Night-Thoughts.*

But if (forgetting Virtue's Rules) thy Friend
From ſlighter Foibles to bold Vice deſcend,
Then, then, or never, be thy Friendſhip brave,
Or dare to looſe him or his Virtue ſave;
Try ſoft Perſuaſion, all thine Influence try,
Perhaps with kind Intreaties he'll comply;
If not, on milder Means no longer ſtand,
Probe deep the feſtring Wound with ſteady Hand;
Shew Ruin nigh, ſpeak thus, with manly Force,
" Shou'dſt thou not inſtant quit thy vicious Courſe,
" Art thou not loſt to Honour, Virtue, Fame,
" And ſunk in deathleſs Infamy and Shame?
" Yes—ſoon thou wilt behold all Comforts fled,
" And ſable Horrors hung around thy Bed;
" An injur'd Conſcience in thy Face ſhall ſtare,
" And turn thee o'er to Mis'ry and Deſpair;
" And when plung'd deep in Woe, perhaps thy End
" To live forlorn, and die without a Friend."

And thou, whoſe Conduct I have taught to chide
Thoſe Friends, who from the Paths of Virtue ſlide,
When erring Nature wounds thy better Fame,
And worthy Friends in Turn thy Folly blame,

Doſt

Doſt thou againſt their Counſels proud rebel,
Or 'gainſt their Perſons with Reſentment ſwell?
Thou Slave of Ignorance, Perverſeneſs, Pride,
Thou art not in the Scales of Friendſhip try'd;
And know, ſhou'dſt thou perſiſt Reproof to ſcorn,
No genuine Friendſhip ſhall thy Life adorn.

Is thy Friend's Character reputed fair?
Do thou promote it with aſſiduous Care.
The Honor of thy Friend moſt ſacred hold,
In ſuch a Cauſe 'tis virtuous to be bold;
In ſuch a Cauſe—ſhou'd Envy dare to blame,
Or foul-mouth'd Calumny thy Friend defame,
And thou prove cold his Virtue to defend,
Thy Baſeneſs wou'd diſgrace the Name of Friend.

If glorious Deeds thy Friend ſhall undertake,
Or ſtriking Talents thy Attention wake,
A worthy Emulation never blame,
Nor be the laſt to own his riſing Fame;
A *Friend* ſhou'd be the firſt to publiſh forth
His riſing Genius and intrinſic Worth,
To mark what laudable his Life unfolds,
And emulate thoſe Virtues he beholds.

Be no Licentiouſneſs in Friendſhip ſeen;
Preſerve due Rev'rence with a graceful Mien.
In Converſation keep a juſt Degree,
Obliging, courteous, and yet nobly free.
Let Friendſhip never ſtoop to Folly's Style,
Nor on the wanton Jeſt vouchſafe a Smile;
Yea, never let her be ſo far miſled,
As meanly to comply with all that's ſaid;
Nor yet ſo petulant as to defend
Each trivial Point againſt a worthy Friend.

All meaner Views aſide, thy Thoughts employ,
Thy Friend to profit, or to give him Joy;
For manly Converſe 'mongſt united Hearts,
Inſtruction and Delight at once imparts;
And gen'rous Offices in Friendſhip bind,
Beyond the Pow'r of Wealth, a grateful Mind.

Yet ſhalt thou never, tho' to ſerve thy Friend,
'Gainſt Virtue or thy Conſcience dare t'offend;
Nay, more, ſhou'd Av'rice, with deluſive Gold;
Shou'd proud Ambition, by Succeſſes bold;
Shou'd titled Honours, at a Nation's Coſt;
Shou'd ſmiling Lux'ry, with wanton Boaſt;

Shou'd theſe, or any Pow'rs like theſe, draw nigh,
And bold thy Friend with ſtrong Temptation try,
It were a Crime ſhou'dſt thou in Silence ſtand
(Much more deſert him) when the Foe's at Hand.

Whatever Secrets Friends to thee unfold,
Thy Faith is broke if but a Secret's told,
Such is th' important Charge; and yet there are
Who wiſh to know, and ev'ry Secret ſhare;
Deſpiſe th' unmanly Thought, and keep thy Heart
Above the Weakneſs of ſo mean a Part.
But when thy Friend his Boſom wou'd diſcloſe,
And on thy Faith his Confidence repoſe,
Then kindly hear him, ſpeak, and let him find
A ſure Aſylum in thy ſocial Mind.

If 'twixt thy Friends a warm Debate occur,
(And where the Friends whoſe Judgments never err?)
If thou canſt do it by perſuaſive Art,
To reconcile them is a noble Part.
But ſince both view their Conduct clear with thee,
And he who errs can oft no Errors ſee,
'Twere wrong ſhou'dſt thou as Arbiter preſide,
Tho' Juſtice with her Scales the *Sentence* guide;

For grant it juſt, 'twill moſtly one offend,
And make a Foe of one a valued Friend.

When bleſt with Friends of Virtue, Temper, Senſe,
Be neither apt to give nor take Offence:
Unworthy Friendſhip's Name, who ſeem intent
To take Affront when no Affront is meant.
Or grant that Friends may culpably offend,
And e'en ſometimes on trivial Points contend;
Do they on haughty Niceties demur?
Avaunt th'ignoble Thoughts that wou'd defer
A Reconcilement. Ne'er let Pride conceal
Who wou'd be firſt the bleeding Wound to heal.

But ſhou'd thy Friend to dang'rous Vice give Way,
Shou'd he be Proof 'gainſt all that thou canſt ſay
For Virtue's Cauſe, defer not to withdraw
From him who rudely ſpurns at Virtue's Law;
Yet let no Hatred 'gainſt him be expreſt,
Or keen Reſentment harbour in thy Breaſt;
Sure 'tis enough, without thy Boſom torn
By rough'ning Paſſions, or indignant Scorn,
To ſee the Man whom late thy Boſom knew,
Since loſt to Virtue, loſt to Friendſhip too.

Who

Who cheapen Friendſhip, little do they know
What Joys refin'd from genuine Friendſhip flow;
Who cheapen Friendſhip, know not they diſdain
More Wealth than India, which they might obtain.
On this terraqueous Ball, ſuppoſe one born
With ev'ry Bleſſing that can Life adorn,
Without Society—can he enjoy?
In dreary Solitude—can he employ
His many mental Pow'rs? Say, would he plow
In Fields of Science, were there none to know
His high Atchievements? Tell me where's the Man
Wou'd waſte the Midnight Oil on ſuch a Plan?

True Friendſhip gives the Zeſt to human Joys,
Without it—all Life's Pleaſures are but Toys:
Without it—Woes on Woes perpetual reign,
And Years ſucceſſive bring but Change of Pain:
Without it—(from the Emp'ror to the Slave)
Life's but a dreary Journey to the Grave.

Dire was th'Affliction great Auguſtus bore,
The Loſs of conquer'd Realms he cou'd reſtore;
But when his Friends were from his Boſom torn,
The Reſt of Life he never ceas'd to mourn;

But like a ſolar Orb, by the Moſt High,
Doom'd in Eclipſe to travel thro' the Sky,
In rayleſs Majeſty the World he ſway'd,
And his paſt Glories never more diſplay'd.

True Friendſhip is the *School* where Thoughts refine,
And moral Virtues brighten to divine;
Againſt Self-Flatt'ry, a ſucceſsful *Rod*;
In deep Diſtreſs, a *Refuge* next to God;
To Virtue, a *Defence*; for who offends
'Gainſt Virtue's Rules before his virtuous Friends?

If Friendſhip wait not on the nuptial Tie,
Woe to the Man that dares the Secret try.

Quick turn thine Eye, where Hymen's Rites are ſought,
And ſee the Numbers whom his Charms have caught;
See the vaſt Tribes whom Love in Triumph led,
Starve on Diſguſt, or with Indiff'rence fed;
The Charms for which eternal Love they ſwore,
Fled in Fruition, whence they love no more.

But ſee the leſſer Tribes, the nuptial Few,
In whom true Love with pious Friendſhip grew,

Tho'

Tho' Novelty's deſtroy'd their Paſſions glow;
Yea e'en their Pleaſures with Enjoyment grow.
No Lack of Beauty, Riches, Honor, Fame,
Can e'er eclipſe the Luſtre of their Flame.
Much leſs can Pain or Sickneſs damp their Fires,
For tend'reſt Sympathy each Breaſt inſpires,
Till long-try'd Friendſhip ev'ry Grief aſſuage,
And glad their Moments in declining Age.

To counſel in Diſtreſs, to lend kind Aid;
To ſhare the Burden on another laid;
To eaſe the lab'ring Thought, the anxious Fear,
From burſting Grief, to wipe the dropping Tear;
To ſooth the virtuous Mind by Wrongs o'erpreſt,
And ſpring a Hope in the deſponding Breaſt;
To hear the chearful Voice, by Virtue taught;
To prove ſweet Converſe, with Inſtruction fraught;
To find Benevolence unbounded flow,
And Love in Confidence ſtill dearer grow;
To feel another's Raptures ſeize the Heart;
To feel it, Pleaſure, Pleaſure to impart;
To join th'endearing Strife, where each wou'd prove,
In gen'rous Offices, his greater Love:

Till higheſt Emulation each confeſs,
And ſmiling Pleaſure ev'ry Heart poſſeſs:
Theſe, theſe are Friendſhip's Joys, they are divine,
And glorious Friendſhip, Mortal! may be thine.
They are divine—ſince but the Virtuous know
Th'exalted Pleaſures which from Friendſhip flow.
They are divine—ſince, from true Friendſhip's Ties,
E'en Saints and "Angels gather half their Joys."

Lo ſuch the *Pleaſures* which on Friendſhip tend!
And ſuch th' *Importance* of a virtuous Friend!"

He ſaid, and ſmil'd:—I ſtood rapt with Delight
And Extacy of Thought, when, quick to Sight,
In Blaze of more than former Glory vail'd,
He upwards ſprung. The dazzling Pomp aſſail'd
So ſtrong my weaker Frame, I ſaw no more,
But waking found th' inſtructive Scene was o'er.
Yet ſtill on Fancy dwells the glorious Theme,
And all the Pleaſures of the *heav'nly Dream*.

F I N I S.